



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/765,112	01/18/2001	Karl Lang	ME-30	8261

7590 02/23/2006
Friedrich Kueffner
317 Madison Avenue, Suite 910
New York, NY 10017

EXAMINER

CROSS, LATOYA I

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1743

DATE MAILED: 02/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/765,112	Applicant(s) LANG, KARL	
	Examiner LaToya C. Younger	Art Unit 1743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 January 2005.
 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to Applicants' amendments filed on January 7, 2005. Claims 1-29 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The amended claims recite the presence of attachments at predetermined positions on the instrument holder. The original specification fails to provide support for such "attachments" at predetermined locations. The new matter should be cancelled from the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 1- 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohlin in view of US Patent 5,650,122 to Harris et al.

Ohlin discloses a device for cleaning the exterior of instruments, such as transfer

Art Unit: 1743

devices. The device comprises a ring (22) for holding the transfer device. The ring is connected to an arm, which in turn is connected to a vertical post (23) on a housing (11). The ring surrounds the transfer instrument entirely. The vertical post is mounted for axial reciprocation and rotation. A washing device (24) is provided to wash the transfer instruments. The washing device is located vertically below the transfer instruments. The washing device contains a passageway (34), through which wash fluid flows into a recess (31) where the transfer instruments are contacted with the wash fluid. The washing device is separate from the instrument holder. With respect to the wash device (24) being movable relative to the instruments being cleaned, Ohlin teaches that the collar of the wash device need not be stationary while the body to be cleaned is displaceable, but the collar may move while the instrument being cleaned is stationary (col. 3, lines 51-53). Thus, the wash device may be movable in relation to the instrument being cleaned. Presumably, a drive mechanism allows the instrument and/or wash device to be movable. The housing (11) serves as a constraint to limit the movement of the vertical post. See figures 1-3.

Ohlin differs from the instantly claimed invention in that there is no disclosure of a jet orifice that sprays wash fluid at the instruments that are to be cleaned.

Harris et al teach an analysis instrument having a wash manifold (486) for washing aspiration tubes. The wash manifold is charged with a high pressure stream (jet stream) of wash solution by a pump. The wash manifold has multiple wash tubes (484), each of the wash tubes having a fluid outlet/orifice (488) to direct wash solution at the aspiration tubes. The tubes Harris et al further teaches that the fluid outlets are angled toward the aspiration tube at an angle of about 15°, as recited in claims 8, 9, 15, 16 and 17. Harris et al teach that the diameter of the outlet is 0.027 inch (0.68 mm), as recited in claims 12-14. Further, Harris et al teach that in spraying the wash solution, an agitated scrubbing action is provided and the time required to conduct the wash cycle is reduced. See col. 15, lines 26-45. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use jet orifices directed at an angle in the wash

Art Unit: 1743

ring of Ohlin to enhance the washing process (because of the scrubbing action provided by spraying) and thus reduce the time needed to completely wash the instruments. It would have also been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use multiple jets to assure that the entire instrument is cleaned. With respect to the claim recitation that the instrument holder be designed to hold more than one instrument, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that more than one instrument could fit into the holder of Ohlin, in other words, two or more smaller instruments could fit into the ring and be washing at one time.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed January 7, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With respect to the washing device holding more than one instrument attached to the instrument holder at predefined locations, the Examiner notes that Ohlin shows embodiments where one instrument is being cleaned. However, such would not preclude one from placing more than one smaller instrument into the ring and cleaning two or more at the same time. Multiple smaller vessels, such as bundles of capillary tubes could fit into the ring for washing. Applicants' use of the phrase "designed to hold at least two instruments" does not provide any structural limitation, other than that the device be "capable" of holding more than one instrument. The holder of Ohlin would allow "attachment" of the vessels to be cleaned since the walls of the holder would actually hold the vessels in place. Thus, the walls of the holder would be the "attachments".

With respect to the combination of the Ohlin and Harris et al, the Examiner notes that Harris et al is cited only for its teaching of using a jet orifice for high pressure spraying of wash solution onto vessels.


Art Unit: 1743

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LaToya C. Younger whose telephone number is 571-272-1256. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 10:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and on alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill A. Warden can be reached on 571-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

lcy


MONIQUE T. COLE
PRIMARY EXAMINER